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THE PASTS OF A PĀLAIYAKĀRAR:

THE ETHNOHISTORY OF A SOUTH INDIAN LITTLE KING

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines a text which is the family history of a line of south Indian "little kings," or pālaiyakārars. Beginning with a discussion of different modes of history, I analyze this text as both a statement of a particular history and a cultural representation of a more general modality of history. As a particular history, this text enables me to talk about conceptions of royal appropriateness and sovereignty, of political relations, and of kingly privileges; as a cultural form the text provides clues about the relations of these cultural conceptions to a structural form of narrative emplotment with all its underlying assumptions about time, causation, and process. Finally, I consider how a hermeneutical exercise of this sort is very important for Western analysts who wish to reconstruct the "history" of south Indian politics.

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History and Ethnohistory

From the little attention given by the natives of India to History, or tradition, historical subjects are generally involved in dark obscurity or embellished with unintelligible fables.

S.R. Lushington  
Collector of Poligar Peshkash, Southern Pollams,  
December 24, 1800

That Hindu India has had a severely underdeveloped sense of history is a commonplace assumption. Unfavorable contrasts are made not only with the West but with that most historical of Asian civilizations, China, as well as with the Islamic world. Traditional Indian "historiography," when it is referred to at all, is most often characterized as fabulous legend and religious myth, bearing no relation to the past succession of real events. Not only is there thought to be a paucity of chronicles which provide the political historian with definite dynastic details and other such political facts, there is no philosophy or philosopher of history to allow one to so characterize an intellectual domain, let alone to compare with something like Ibn Khaldun's sage and still much cited Muqaddimah.

But is it true that India has had, until such was introduced by the British, no sense of history; and what does it mean that this assumption has borne so little critical scrutiny?

Indeed, however caricatured the above portrayal, those who have written Indian history over the last two hundred years have not only remained unquestioning in their assurance that they are the first historians, they have only recently begun to use any local and indigenous sources at all. Often, this is because of a continued acceptance of Lushington's view of Hindu history, a view which dismisses local histories as interesting myths at best. Fortunately, however, the preoccupation with caste in the study of India has also meant that some caste and family histories have been collected for scholarly purposes, and a number of recent studies have forcefully demonstrated the potential range of uses to which these sources can be put.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, most discussions of this kind of material have viewed the "histories" only as social charters directed towards the census, where the decennial designation of caste status became a major focus of social mobility and contests over rank between 1870 and 1930. While it is true that caste histories were written, published, and submitted as petitions for census recognition, the study of caste histories from this single perspective has obscured the persistence of a cultural genre as well as the significance of this genre in a much wider social and historical context. Among other things, the so-called mythical components of these histories are considered in such analyses as nothing more than rhetorical fictions generated for a real political arena, rather than as important clues towards

understanding indigenous social and historical thought.<sup>2</sup>

The consideration of indigenous histories is by no means pursued only by those who are interested in discovering the structure and content of indigenous "historical" thought, nor do I mean to suggest that this is the only legitimate use of these histories. Jan Vansina has done brilliant work on oral traditions in Africa, and by demonstrating the potential accuracy and usefulness of oral tradition he has immeasurably broadened the scope of African historiography.<sup>3</sup> And for Southeast Asian history, the importance of the hikayat, or the traditional chronicle, has been increasingly accepted by scholars of differing backgrounds, interests, and disciplinary persuasions.<sup>4</sup> But the exogenously conceived classification of hikayat into "histories" and "romances" exemplifies the common assumption that Western notions about history should be used exclusively to define the domain of historical thought.<sup>5</sup> Writing about Sumatra, James Siegal has noted that early Dutch historical writing was characterized by a special vigor deriving from the belief on the part of the Dutch scholars that they were "establishing a realm of 'fact' in the face of a tradition which seemed practically to lack it or at best to accord it with little importance."<sup>6</sup> And, as Shelly Errington has pointed out, even in more recent and far more sophisticated scholarship, the central intent behind the treatment of indigenous texts has continued to be much the same, even if the realm of fact has been allowed to expand in more recent studies.<sup>7</sup>

Both Errington and Siegal make the point that underlies my approach here: indigenous texts and traditions which concern the

"past" must be classified and analyzed in terms and categories which are consonant with the particular modes of "historical" understanding which are appropriate, indeed posited by, the texts and traditions themselves. When this is not done, what usually results is the denial of the possibility that there is a legitimate and integral historical sensibility expressed in the texts, and more concretely, the distortion of the intended meanings of the texts. As Errington says about the question of the relation of the past and the hikayat:<sup>8</sup>

The form in which that question is posed intrudes into any possible direct answer, for when those with a historical consciousness ask such a question, we imagine 'the past' as a structured and sequential whole. If hikayat in general had a relationship to the past, thus conceived, then we would expect that the genre hikayat would present us with a consistent 'way of viewing the past.' Such is not the case.

Errington's critique is made even more searching by contrasting the structure of time, the organization and evaluation of past events, and the status and meaning of language in the post-Renaissance political rhetoric of the West with those in the Malay hikayat. But the most important consequence of this kind of critique is that it frees us to examine any given text in its own terms before we ask (or simply classify) in what sense it is or is not "historical."

The way in which this problem has usually been treated has been to distinguish between history, which is how we in the West understand the past, and myth, which is how "primitives" understand it. In disciplinary terms, historians have been those who set out to "discover" the past of these areas where there was no prior history, using fragmentary records from fossils to inscriptions to establish an

actual chronological record of past events, empirical if sometimes meagre. Anthropologists have collected myths, native legends which are seen as a vital superstructural component of a synchronic social structure. It has been years, of course, since the full strength of this disciplinary caricature has given way, but in genealogical terms it does explain why historians and anthropologists have often talked past each other, the concerns of the one analyzing myths irrelevant to the other translating epigraphy or ruminating over remains. And, while historians and anthropologists now share many of the same sources and concerns about the nature of social structure in a diachronic dimension, there is still a fairly sharp demarcation between those who study myth and those who study history.

As we see this demarcation fade,<sup>9</sup> however, the irony is of course that we are only now coming to realize what the ancient Greeks took for granted: that history by itself is simply speech about the particular, but that this record of particulars has no meaning or form until it is "configured" in some narrative (or theoretical) structure, a structure which for the Greeks was, appropriately enough, epic poetry and tragedy.<sup>10</sup> Without myth, that is, such configuration would have been impossible. Indeed, and prior to the question of narrative configuration, myth worked to select the very particulars which would be configured. As M. I. Finley remarks:<sup>11</sup>

The atmosphere in which the Fathers of History set to work was saturated with myth. Without myth, indeed, they could never have begun their work. The past is an intractable, incomprehensible mass of uncounted and uncountable data. It can be rendered intelligible only if some selection is made, around some focus or foci. In all the endless debate that has been generated by Ranke's



wie es eigentlich gewesen ("how things really were"), a first question is often neglected: what "things" merit or require consideration in order to establish how they "really were"? Long before anyone dreamed of history, myth gave an answer. That was its function, or rather one of its functions; to make the past intelligible and meaningful by selection, by focussing on a few bits of the past which thereby acquired permanence, relevance, universal significance.

Thus myth did not simply record the past, it created it.

If, then, myth is simply another historiographic possibility, a distinctive way of establishing sequence and relevance in the understanding and representation of the past, the separate analytic treatment of myth and history becomes somewhat more problematic. Anthropologists must realize both that myths have histories, and that they are histories. Historians must accept, as Bernard Cohn has written, that they must read texts and codified oral traditions not simply "to establish chronologies, or to sift historical fact from mythic fancy, but to try to grasp the meanings of the forms and contents of these texts in their own cultural terms."<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, in this paper I intend to read and explicate the family history (vamcāvali) of one south Indian little king (pālaiyakarar) in such a way so as not simply to report what is said about the past but to analyze in what sense the past exists for the text. Taking seriously Finley's comment that the function of myth is "to make the past intelligible and meaningful by selection, by focussing on a few bits of the past which thereby acquired permanence, relevance, and universal significance," I shall reconstruct the sets of relevant events selected for narrative emplotment, and establish how these events are talked about, the key symbols through which they

are expressed, and move on from here to the significance of these patterns of selection for the general structure of historical representation. While in this paper I will concentrate on only one text, the method that I seek to employ here is one which ultimately must be used with a great many texts in an attempt to identify and delineate an entire ideological discourse (as well as, if they exist, salient differences within this discourse and the extent to which these differences might be correlated with levels of political authority, or with caste, class, region, or other such factors). This historiographical problematic has recently been well stated, and elegantly undertaken, by William Sewell, who wrote at the beginning of his work: "The key problem thus becomes not the delineation of the thought of a series of authors [as is the problem in much intellectual history, Sewell has told us before] but the reconstruction of discourse out of fragmentary sources."<sup>13</sup> Finally, although this agenda would take us far beyond the scope of this paper, I wish not merely to show how this text created a past for certain Tamilians of the eighteenth century, but at least to suggest how it might enable us -- the external others -- better to create and configure our own analytic consideration of their past, to help us select relevant events and then to interpret these events in our reconstruction of kingship and the nature of local level political authority in the little kingdoms of Tamil Nāṭu. It is at this latter point that I intend to use this ethnohistory to shape my own historical investigation.

However, it is at this last point -- enter my own history -- that I will also introduce perspectives and ask questions which do not derive from the text itself. One of the consequences of this analytic intervention is that I suggest interpretations which, in the form as I have put them, would not occur to participants. This is of course the sense in which cultural analysis creates an episteme which is different from the episteme of the cultural form itself, and although this shift is always problematic, it is not only necessary, but inevitable. But we must try continually to remind ourselves of our intrusion. Indeed, ethnohistorical investigation must operate at the interstices of these interdependent agendas, or epistemes, and, with the hope that the former agenda will constantly check the latter, I shall proceed to the text.<sup>14</sup>

### The Ethnohistorical Text, and Context

The text which I have chosen for analysis here is one of many family histories written by or for south Indian little kings, or *pālaiyakārars*. *Pālaiyakārars* of the southern Tamil country, about whom I write here, ruled over *pālaiyams*, literally armed camps, but in fact small kingdoms ranging in size from three villages to almost two thousand square miles. *Pālaiyakārars* seem to have emerged as the most important loci of locality rule in the period of south Indian history following the collapse of the great *Coḷa* empire in the thirteenth century. The descendents of local chieftains (*araiyars*) who exchanged protection and munificent donorship for shares of village production and the position and perquisites of local leadership, the

pālaiyakārars were most conspicuously successful in the dryer regions of southern India, particularly in the dry-land belts of the Coimbatore, Dindigul, Tirunelvēli, Ramnad, Maturai, and Putukkōttai areas. The dissolution of the central political order with the demise of Vijayanagara in the early seventeenth century and the subsequent collapse of the regional Nāyaka rulers in the early eighteenth century meant at the same time that the smaller units in the political system, those at the symbolic as well as the ecological periphery, took on new importance in those two centuries. While some of the little kingdoms in important political areas were absorbed by new states such as Mysore (both the Wotiyars and later Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan) and later the Nawāb of Arcot, the little kingdoms of the areas mentioned above gained strength by consolidating their caste and territorial loyalties and ties and asserting their not inconsiderable military prowess in selected engagements, sometimes among themselves, but also against or on behalf of some of the major contestants for political hegemony in the southern area. The little kingdoms never totally closed in upon themselves, however, as they both maintained ties with each other and continued to seek protection and even overlordship from some more powerful king. In examining the text before us we will note the persistence of an orientation "upward" in the political universe, even as in examining the mechanisms of these local political systems I have also observed the persistence of local relations predicated on caste, lineage, service, worship, the sharing of rights to land and other agrarian resources, as well as the distribution of honors which had their immediate origin in the sovereignty of the little kings

themselves.<sup>15</sup>

The text to be examined here is one of a number of vamcāvalis, genealogies, literally meaning the path, or road, of a family (vamca). These vamcāvalis concern the families of the little kings, the pālaiyakārars, and every pālaiyakārar family I have come across has at least one vamcāvali. The vamcāvalis are genealogies both in that they list the entire line of the family, and in that genealogy acts as the principal movement and the narrative frame, or mode of emplotment. What chronology is to narrative history in the West, genealogy is in the vamcāvali: it establishes sequence, relevance, and structure. It also establishes the purpose of the vamcāvali, which is specifically to narrate the origins of the present pālaiyakārar and his family. The events which are related about his origins and past are those which are considered to be necessary to establish the present and which are desired to be put forward as the record of the past. For, it is this past which constitutes the heritage of the king and his family.

All of the vamcāvalis which I have used, the present one included, were collected in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century under the direction of Colonel Colin Mackenzie. Mackenzie, who was both a distinguished military officer and engineer, did work in surveying and map making which led to a succession of posts culminating in his being named Surveyer General of India in 1810. His work also led to extensive contacts with the Indian countryside, during which he became very interested in the "Antiquities, the History and the Institutions of the South of India."<sup>16</sup> Over the years

Mackenzie conducted surveys in the Nizam's dominions, in Guntur, Mysore, the Ceded Districts, and other parts of Madras, and as a regular part of his surveys he and his "establishment" collected local histories of kingly dynasties, chiefly families, castes, villages, temples, religious monasteries, as well as other local traditions and religious and philosophical texts in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, Tamil, Telegu, Kanarese, Malayalam, and Hindi.

Mackenzie was an avid collector and, as his close friend Sir Alex Johnston wrote, was "diffident of sending anything forth to the world whilst there seemed to be any part of the subject susceptible of more complete elucidation. He was therefore chiefly employed in collecting materials for future work. . . ." <sup>17</sup> Mackenzie did intend to prepare a Catalogue Raisonnee, but for the reasons Johnston cited never got around to it. This is highly unfortunate as we know far less than we would like about all the circumstances surrounding the collection of the materials. Information regarding the manuscript collections is scant and unsystematic when it is available at all, but some insights can be garnered from the "Letters and Reports from Native Agents Employed to Collect Books, Traditions, etc., in the Various Parts of the Peninsula," which covered the years from 1803 to 1821. <sup>18</sup> These records suggest that while the process of collecting information involved the use of information to exert influence, with the ultimate wish of many informants being employment in the service of Mackenzie, many of the traditions transcribed by Mackenzie's men were authentic.

The real historiographical question, of course, is which manuscripts were simply collected and which were produced. It is sometimes fairly easy to distinguish; for example, one manuscript was entitled, "Depositions of the Bramins of Srirangam and Trichinapali on the subject of the ancient history of that country."<sup>19</sup> Another account, "The Raja Cheritram of the Ancient Rajahs of Dutchana Dickam," however much it might be based on a traditional manuscript, refers to the "lies" made up by Rama to justify the importance of Ramesvarem, and thus underwent uncertain accretion at the very least.<sup>20</sup> Other texts which were translated by some of Mackenzie's assistants and now are bound and preserved in London are self-evidently even more problematic. For example, "Mootiah's Chronological and Historical Account of the Modern Kings of Madura," begins with the following preface:<sup>21</sup>

I turned my thoughts towards the Chronological and Historical Accounts of the Gentoo kings of Madura written upon Palmyra leaves in a vulgar style of the Tamil language which I found to be satisfactory but the same being in a confused order and full of tautologies and repetitions which, if I proceed to translate literally into the English, it would prove absurd in the sight of the learned, I have therefore, in my following version of the said account, omitted the tautological and repeated expressions and set aside prolixity but following laconism, digested the Chronicles into eleven chapters and a preamble prefixed thereto, to which I added the characters of the Madurean kings as I learnt from the above learned Mendicant.

It takes little imagination to realize the consequences of this kind of tampering for a cultural analysis of the form of a text, let alone its content.

Clearly, the texts which were simply collected are the most useful of the Mackenzie collection. Fortunately, the vamcāvalis seem to have been composed well before Mackenzie and his men came around searching for historical documents, though many of them were added on to at the end and seem in their new forms to be in part petitions to the East India Company for favorable consideration, the concern often that the pālaiyam be permanently settled as a zamindāri estate, or that the peshkash (tribute) be reduced, or in some cases even that the descendent of the kingly line be released from prison, where he had been put after participating in the pālaiyakārār wars of the late eighteenth century. The vamcāvali to be examined here shows clear traces of tampering in the last paragraph, but the earlier parts of the text were certainly not composed with the British in mind.

#### The Family History of the Ūttumalai Pālaiyapattu

The pālaiyakārārs of Ūttumalai were of the Maravar caste. The Maravars were concentrated in the Ramnad area, both in the Ramanātapuram and Civakaṅkai estates and in the southern part of Putukkōṭṭai state, and in the western belt of Tirunelvēli district, which stretched out along the foothills of the Western Ghats in dry but fertile red soil areas. Ūttumalai was the largest both in population and area of the Maravar zamindaries in Tirunelvēli when boundaries were drawn in the early nineteenth century. In 1823 its total population was 14,612 and its area was about one hundred and twenty-three square miles.<sup>22</sup> Adjacent on its northwestern side to the Cōkkampatti Zamindary, the second largest of the Maravar estates, it



was located only about ten miles to the east of Tenkāci, a town important historically because it was the seat of Pāṇṭiyan rule in its last phase, after Cōla rule, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

This is the longest of the vamaṇāvalis I have read, and in many respects the most interesting. For example, traditions relating to both the Tamil bhakti groups of saints, the Vaisnavite Ālvārs and the Saivite Nāyanārs, are extensively incorporated in the early portions of the text. This text also has one of the most clearly developed narrative structures of any of the vamaṇāvalis. For the convenience of the reader, since there are not only no paragraphs but no sentences in the original Tamil, I have paragraphed the text in accordance with its episodic structure. This structure is genealogical. The texts, after all, are family-cum-dynastic histories that inscribe succession to the throne and title of the little kingdom. The vamaṇāvali does not concern the wider family except when events concerning the king draw them in. My justification for my paragraphing is that the principal episodes of the text are circumscribed by lists of succession, lists which often give names of kings of quite a number of generations before relating the next narrative episode. My breaks thus come always at the point when a transition from one story to the next is marked by such a successional list. I have otherwise translated the entire text as it was copied from the original palm leaf manuscript which remains in Madras.<sup>23</sup>

Ūttumalai Pālaiyapattu Vamcāvali

The little kings (pālaiyakarars) of Ūttumalai are of the Maravar caste. In ancient days, the king of the Pāṇṭiya country, having no sons, performed penance and great austerities, and worshipped the goddess Pārvati; he further resolved to proceed on a Digvijayam (conquest of the quarters) to display his valor. For this he needed a small army. Parvati appeared before him, and from her right side emerged an army. Because of her excellence the soldiers were born with great strength and bravery, and they went immediately to perform service for the king. Because they were born from the side of Parvati, she gave this caste the title: Tēvar (God). Having created and then named them, the Goddess organized the army and they set out for the Digvijayam, in which they achieved great victory.

A descendent of this great Maravar caste was King Tinnan. Tinnan was off in the forest hunting with his clan but, as at one point he went off alone, he became lost. He continued, however, to hunt alone. Roaming about, he came upon a temple of Siva. Tinnan was thereupon overcome by the serene beauty of the idol and of the sacred place, and he then and there dedicated himself to the worship of the idol. He went out and killed animals which provided tender meat, cooked the meat in fire, and tasted each piece before offering it to the god. He chose only those tender morsels that were properly cooked. For his offerings, this Maravar king carried the pre-tasted meat in his hands, the water for the ritual unction in his mouth, and the garlands of flowers and the vermillion in his hair. He approached the idol and removed the flowers and other offerings with the help of

his feet and slippers, washed the idol with the water that he carried in his mouth, adorned the god with the flowers from his hair, and finally offered the cooked meat pieces that he had already tasted and judged to be fine. The priest of the temple noticed that someone had been coming to the temple everyday, and, after removing the flowers the priest had placed there, had polluted the temple with common flowers, meat, etc. The priest became very upset, but one day in his dream Lord Siva appeared to him and told him about King Tinnan and his complete devotion and told the priest to hide and observe this for himself. Siva added that he would put Tinnan's devotion (bhakti) and determination to the test. The next morning the priest came and performed worship (puja) and then hid himself nearby. Shortly thereafter Tinnan came and performed his own worship and proceeded to pray to Siva. As he was praying, blood began to ooze from one eye of the idol. Tinnan saw this and offered his own eye to the deity; when he took out his eye and placed it on the idol's eye the bleeding stopped. Then the other eye of the idol started to bleed. Seeing this, Tinnan felt that he must offer his second eye, as that alone would be the proper remedy. In order to locate the bleeding eye after completely blinding himself, he placed his foot (on which he still wore his slippers) on the idol's eye and removed his second eye and placed it on the idol. At this moment Siva appeared and embraced Tinnan and blessed him with the name Kannappan, "He who applied his own eye." With this blessing, Kannappan attained release.

Yet another descendent of the Maravar clan was named Kaliyan. He desired to perform Tiruppani (the giving of gifts to and the

renovation of a temple) to the Srīraṅkam temple. Kaliyaṇ spent all the money from his treasury and prepared the offerings. These offerings suddenly disappeared, as a result of which Kaliyaṇ sold his kingdom and, still short of money, resorted to highway robbery with his father-in-law and his brothers-in-law. When they collected sufficient treasure by this means, they were able to perform the Tiruppani. They went on worshipping Srī Reṅkanātar Cuvāmi (a form of Viṣṇu) of Srīraṅkam, but the source of income continued to be highway robbery. They then stole a golden image of the Buddha hidden in a cave in Nāgapattinam. When it became increasingly difficult to rob they prayed to Srī Reṅkanātar to help them. Then they went out on yet another mission. Srī Reṅkanātar himself dressed in fineries, adorned himself with many valuable jewels, and mounted a horse and came near them. When they attacked the Lord he pretended to be overpowered by them and allowed himself to be robbed of everything he had including the horse on which he rode. But one ornament on Srī Reṅkanātar's foot could not be removed. So, Kaliyaṇ used his teeth to try and pry it off. As soon as Kaliyaṇ's tongue touched Reṅkanātar's foot he realized who he was and began to pray and sang a hymn of praise to the deity. Having revealed himself, Reṅkanātar blessed Kaliyaṇ with the name Kalla Maṅkai Ālvār, and thus he became a saint.

Descendents of this Maṇavar clan, who were our ancestors, were living in Srīvaikuntayam Kōttai. In those days, a band of highway robbers were terrorizing the nearby countryside. At this, our ancestor Marutappattēvar went to this area and overpowered the Kallars. On hearing this, the Paṇṭiya Rāja summoned Marutappattēvar,

congratulated him, and told him: "Thanks to you the people are happy now. As you are responsible for their well-being today, we shall grant you the Tiruccināppalli country as your domain (pālaiyapattū)."

So saying, the Pāṇṭiya Rāja bestowed upon him the title Vijayakunārāma Pāṇṭiya Marutappattēvar and gave him a pair of fly whisks, a flag with the emblem of a tiger, the symbol of the Cōlas, a flag with the emblem of a fish, the symbol of the Pāṇṭiyans, and a flag of Indra (King of the Gods), and sent him off to Tirucci, where he ruled his domain.

His son was Manināṭamarutappattēvar; his son was Cuvarkākamarutappattēvar; his son was Pāṇṭiya Marutappattēvar; his son was Mīnākṣicuntaramarutappattēvar; his son was Kuvanamarutappattēvar; his son was Jayappirutāpamarutappattēvar; and in this way ten generations ruled the domain.

During Jayappirutāpamarutappattēvar's reign in Kuntaiyamkōttai there was a very beautiful girl. Pilgrims who passed through said that this girl was fit to be the wife of a great king. Hearing this, a few kings asked for her hand in marriage, but all of these offers were refused. As a result, wars were waged, these kings were defeated, their elephants, horses, weapons, titles, and crowns were seized, and they were driven away. After this, the Pāṇṭiya King asked for the girl's hand in marriage. The reply came as follows:

"You are of the solar race; and therefore you cannot marry our Maravar girl. The fates of other kings who have made such an offer are well known. If you do not know this, you can see that we Maravars have captured their weapons and keep them on the outskirts of our country, their crowns are being looked after, and their possessions are used as

borders in decorating the roofs of our houses. Further, their umbrellas are folded and kept aside. Do you really hope to get a girl from such a Maravar family for the royal wedding?" When this reply was conveyed to the Pāṇṭiya King, he became very angry and a war ensued. Finally, Jayappirutāpamarutappattēvar proceeded towards the north and settled there.

At that time in Kotakai Nātu, the place where he settled, those who traveled the highways were being troubled by a group of people who lived in the forest (vanam) where they could not be overpowered. The Maravar King collected a small army and succeeded in overpowering them and putting an end to the trouble. When the royal court came to know about this they were very happy and invited him to court. He was given a howdah (saddle for elephant), a pair of fly whisks, a five-colored shawl, a banner with the emblem of Hanuman and another with the emblem of the Brahminy kite, and was given Cuntararājapuram as his own domain, and he was given the title: Kotakai Cēkari Marutappattēvar; and he was sent off.

After ruling over his domain, he was succeeded by his son, Vijayavarkunappāṇṭiya Marutappattēvar, who in turn was succeeded by Pirutāpamarutappattēvar, whose son was Kotakaimarutappattēvar, whose son was Veṅkalamarutappattēvar, who, being without issue, prayed to and worshipped Veṅkatajalapati of Tiruppati. By his blessing, a son was born to him, and he was given the name Tiruveṅkatanā tamarutappattēvar.

During the reign of his son, Marutappattēvar, he left Cuntararājapuram for the southern country, and on the way was attacked

by some Nāttukkallars whom he killed. Hearing of this, the Pāṇṭiyan King of Ukkirankkōṭṭai invited Marutappattēvar to court. Accepting the invitation, Marutappattēvar went to Ukkirankkōṭṭai via Kōṇṭaiyaṅkōṭṭai. Ukkiranppāṇṭiya Rāja welcomed him and said, "We have heard of your bravery and success. In our country there are many Kurumpars who are troublesome. If you can subdue them, I shall give you that country as your domain." At this, Marutappattēvar fought with the Kurumpars and after a heavy loss of life on both sides Marutappattēvar defeated them. Hearing this, Ukkiranppāṇṭiya Rāja accorded him great honor and gave him many gifts, and gave him the Kurumpar's country as his domain — a place called Ūttumalai. And since Marutappattēvar came from the north and settled in the south, as requested by the Pāṇṭiya Rāja, he was given the name, Vijayakunārāmappāṇṭiya Marutappattēvar. Accordingly, he built a fort and cleared the jungle and ruled over the place. His son was Marutappattēvar; his son was Veṅkalamarutappattēvar; his son was Palapattiramarutappattēvar; his son was Pāṇṭiyamarutappattēvar; his son was Corhanamarutappattēvar.

At this time, Corhanamarutappattēvar went to see Sṛī Vallapa Mahārāja at the time of the annual Navarāttiri Kolu festival. Sṛī Vallapa Mahārāja's Navarāttiri Kolu was famous for the various types of agonistic contests arranged for each day; e.g. wrestling, ram fights, horse fights, wild boar fights, and bull fights. One day two intoxicated elephants were brought and were let loose to fight. But one elephant ran amuck and escaped from the arena and threatened the lives of many who had come for the festival, and no one was able to

tame the elephant. Hearing this, the Maravar King came outside and went to confront the beast. He caught hold of the elephant's tail and twisted it until the animal was tamed. Then the mahout came and took the animal away. The Mahārāja was very pleased, and mounted him on the same tamed elephant which was duly decorated with many emblems, flags, and banners, including the howdah, a pair of fly whisks, the five colored shawl, the tiger flag, and he was sent off to the accompaniment of drums and musical instruments, after having been given the title: Kamukamatakki Pitavallamāra Corhana Kānamarutappattēvar (he who caught and subdued the royal elephant). His son was Tiruvēṅkatanāṭamarutappattēvar; his son was Marutappattēvar.

During this period the Karttākkals (the Nāyakars) of Maturai summoned all the palaiyakārars regarding the protection of the fort. Marutappattēvar appointed his men for the protection of the fort and went south where he engaged in the protection of a large area, and he was given many presents as well. Marutappattēvar's son was Palapattiramarutappattēvar, whose son was Marutappattēvar.

He established a Brahman settlement (akkirakāram) in Cuntirapāntiyapuram which he called Marutappūpāl Camuttiram, and for this akkirakāram he consecrated the Perumā Temple. His son was Srī Vallapa Marutappattēvar; and his son was Navanītakkiruṣṇa Marutappattēvar; and his son was Srī Vallapa Marutappattēvar.

In those days the Karttākkals established an akkirakaram in the southern country. Some criminals came and set fire to the akkirakaram and destroyed it. The Karttākkals, wishing to avenge this



terrible act, commanded Srī Vallapa Marutappattēvar to apprehend the criminals. Accordingly, he did so, capturing sixty-four prisoners, though in the fight he lost many men. Because of this he was honored (apimānam) and was given gifts of land on half-assessment and was given a palanquin, banners with the emblems of Hanuman and the Brahminy kite, a copper umbrella, some musical instruments, a tiger skin, and a horse. These sixty-four criminals were taken to the akkirakāram where they committed their crime and one by one their heads were severed. Srī Vallapa's son was Pūcai Marutappattēvar; and his son was Srī Vallapa Marutappattēvar; his son was Vēlāttiri Marutappattēvar; and his son was Navanīta Marutappattēvar.

In his day Tirunelvēli was without a ruler and the Navāpu Cāypu (Nawab of Arcot) sent his son, Makammatu Yicumukān (Muhammed Yusuf Khan) to look into affairs and take control. He took the help of Navanītakirusna Marutappattēvar and brought under control those who were causing trouble, those who were not submissive (kīlppaṭintu natavāmal), and those who were not paying their tribute. Makammatu Yicumukān also used the help of Navanītakirusna to punish Nelakkattum Cevval; and for all this he was very pleased and he presented the Maravar with a howdah, camels, a tampūr drum, a flute, silver sticks, an ornamental container for sandalwood paste, and two flags.

At that time in Tirunelvēli there was anarchy and Makammatu Turai called Navanītakirusna Marutappattēvar and gave him two thousand men and told him to bring order in the area. Achieving this, Navanīta met Makammatu Turai and was told that he should be careful in the work of the Palace and that he should do what he is told. At this time

Rājāmāniya Rājāsri Colonel Maxwell came down to the southern country and called a meeting of all the pālaiyakārars and laid down our duties. When some pālaiyakārars were late in paying their taxes, one of our men was engaged to undertake these collections. He was honored with the gift of a palanquin and a horse and was treated well. To this day we follow the instructions of the honorable London Gentlemen (Mahārāja Rāja Sri Lantaṇ Turai) and we protect the area from Tonti to Āttūr, for which we were honored by the gift of a green umbrella. On behalf of the honorable Company we have fought against Cinnamarutan and Periyamarutan with our armies; we have severed the heads of bulls belonging to our neighboring enemies and thus shown our loyalty to the Company. For this the Company presented us with a horse. In this way my actions have brought favor to the Company. I have shown obedience and worshipful respect in the Company's work, for which I pray for their honorable respect and favor.

Signed: Ūttumalai Marutappa Tēvar.

### Exegesis

Taking the text as a whole, it is clear that the central action of all but the first three episodes is the giving of gifts by the great kings to the little kings. The narrative selects what we need to know to understand these exchanges: what the pālaiyakārar does to merit the attention of the king, and what the king gives him in appreciation and recognition of his merit. This centrality is actually clearer in some of the other vamaṇavalis than in this text, which is made more complicated by the inclusion of purāṇic material.

Indeed, in this text we encounter a narrative frame which traces a series of transformations in the kingly line, such that the Ūttumalai Maravars who begin as devout but unlettered saints of the forest end up as cultured kings who not only have become aware of but have extensively endowed the persons and institutions of Sanskritic culture.

The first paragraph relates the creation/generation of the Ūttumalai kingly family (vamcam). Interestingly, the first cause of creation rests in a theme which occurs often in the vamcavalis, namely, the failure to have male progeny and thus the potential crisis of succession, a crisis which is both personal and political. The Maravar clan (kulam) is thus created in connection with two integrally linked events: first, the worship of Pārvati, and second, the decision of the Pāntiyan king to go on a Digvijayam (conquest of the quarters), both actions embarked upon for the purpose of having a son. An army is needed for the Digvijayam, and to fulfill this need Pārvati appears before the king and from her right side emerges an army. These soldiers are the Maravars, born of divine substance, born of cakti (the goddess, and the female principle of power), born of the right side. Because of the nature of their origin, Pārvati calls the Maravars Gods, Tēvars. As we shall see, naming constitutes an important part of the structure of exchange; one must be given names by a superior, unless one is a god or a universal king. The first action of these Tēvars is to go and perform service (pani, this word also means to be humble, submissive, and to worship) to the king. In these few lines, therefore, the relational axes which will determine

subsequent action in the narrative are established; the Maravars begin with established, indeed parental, relations with a deity and with a king and from the beginning these relations are profoundly interdependent, the creation of the Tēvars by the deity being for the service of the king.

The Maravars have always had the reputation of being a fierce group with great military prowess, a reputation that lived on in an unfortunate sense with the British who classified them as a "martial caste." Two passages from the ancient Tamil poem group, the Kalittokai, depict the Maravars of old:<sup>24</sup>

the wrathful and furious Maravar, whose curled beards resemble the twisted horns of the stag, the loud twang of whose powerful bowstrings, and the stirring sound of whose double-headed drums, compel even kings at the head of large armies to turn their back and fly.

Kalittokai XV 1-7

Of strong limbs and hardy frames and fierce-looking as tigers, wearing long and curled locks of hair, the blood-thirsty Maravar, armed with the bow bound with leather, ever ready to injure others, shoot their arrows at poor and helpless travellers, from whom they can rob nothing, only to feast their eyes on the quivering limbs of their victims.

Kalittokai IV 1-5

Thus the Maravars were represented both as fierce soldiers and merciless highway robbers as early as the first few centuries of the Christian era. Their reputation, while somewhat diminished by the passage of time and disappearance of Caṅkam rhetorical flourish, was not unnoticed, and not uninterpreted, by the British. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century the Maravars were seen as positively

dangerous to the rural social order, and some groups of Maravars were classified as criminal tribes or castes. In a letter dated 15 July 1824 written to the Collector of Tinnevely District, the British Judge of that district noted that the Maravars are:<sup>25</sup>

at best a lawless people, and robbers by profession. . . . Almost in every part of the District you see this caste; idling about, and they can give no satisfactory explanation as to their means of livelihood; they represent themselves as the adherents of the Chokkamputty zamindar or other neighboring ones of the same caste, these persons are generally very well dressed though they receive no pay. The conclusion therefore, must be, that they live by unlawful means, under the cloak of being the Zemindar's followers, and Guards of the Estates.

This, of course, betrays a hyperbolic rhetorical mode equal to that of the Caṅkam poems, and yet the point to be made here is that the Maravars were invested with a particular reputation, one of which they were proud and yet which caused certain classificational problems. In the face of British classificational notions, they had to worry about being branded as a "criminal tribe," and in historical and cultural terms, they had to establish a legitimate claim to kingly status.

As noted earlier, the Maravars settled throughout southern India in areas that were, usually, at best only partially irrigated by small rivers, often nonperennial, and tanks, which they built and maintained with great skill and ingenuity. While they usually settled in groups headed by a pālaiyakārar and attained local dominance, this dominance was over areas which were productively and culturally inferior to the riverine and deltaic areas where Vellalars, the highest of the Sudra castes and the group most typically associated

with settled agriculture, and Brahmins were dominant. It might not be far fetched to conclude that one of the reasons why the Maṛavars were said to have been born out of the right side of Pārvati was to associate them with the right handed castes, which were usually associated in turn with landedness and rural dominance.<sup>26</sup> The reputation of the Maṛavars, while combined with their prestigious position as local chiefs and protectors (kāvalkāraṛa), did set them apart from more peaceful and sedentary cultivating groups who had more direct relations with the kings of the great south Indian dynasties and with the institutions of the great tradition, specifically the great temples and brahmin settlements which were royally endowed.

Given this background, it is perhaps less surprising that the story of Kannapaṇ, née Tinnaṇ, is incorporated into the vaṁcāvali, for there seems to be a marked discontinuity between the royal Tēvar soldiers of the first episode and the uncultivated hunters of the second. The story of Kannapaṇ is well known throughout Tamil Nāṭu, as it is one of the most popular of the legends in the Pēriyapurāṇam, the twelfth century Tamil purāṇic epic which tells the stories of the lives of the sixty-three Saivite Nāyaṇār bhakti saints. The story is adapted here without major alteration, though the version is much shortened and as colloquial as the rest of the vaṁcāvali. No caste is ascribed to Kannapaṇ in the Pēriyapurāṇam, but it is clear that he is the chief of a tribe of hunters who live somewhere in the remote forests or the hills. In the vaṁcāvali, of course, Tinnaṇ is the chief of the great Maṛavar family, in what seems a self-conscious acceptance of the usual assumption that the Maṛavars were originally a

hunting and gathering group which did not occupy the mainstream areas of early Tamil civilization. In the story, Tinnan becomes separated from his group when on a hunting expedition, and as he roams about on his own he comes across a temple dedicated to Civa. It then becomes clearly apparent in the text that while Tinnan is a man of great devotion, who recognizes the sacred significance of this shrine to Civa, he is totally ignorant of the agamic (textual) forms of worship (pūja).

Indeed, the detailed description of Tinnan's worship establishes an explicit set of oppositions. Tinnan's actions are consistent with a hunter's mentality and are specifically opposed to agamic prescriptions for pūja. Pūja involves the honoring of the deity by the offering of garlands of flowers, clothing, hymns and mantras, as well as other sanctified things or actions, and perhaps most importantly by the offer of some kind of food, often uncooked items such as plantains and cocoanuts but also cooked food such as sweet rice prepared by Brahmins, to the deity. As put by Inden,<sup>27</sup> pūja consists fundamentally in attending "to the bodily needs of a deity placed in an enlivened image or emblem -- bathing, oiling, dressing, fanning, perfuming, waving lights, doing obeisance, holding an umbrella and making offerings of food to the deity . . . [in short] the rendering of hospitality or service to the deity." The highlight of pūja is the feeding of the god and then the return of some portion of that which was used in worship as pracātam (in Tamil, piracātam), which means transvalued substance; this pracātam most typically consists of the leavings (ucchista) of the food which was first tasted

by the deity and then returned to the devotees for their consumption and thus ritual incorporation. Inden notes that other privileges concerning "physical contact" were also part of the completion of pūja.<sup>28</sup> Complicated procedures for pūja, particularly in temples, but also in domestic shrines, were codified in the agāmas, texts which, composed from the sixth century on, became in procedural terms as important for the conduct of pūja as the Vedas had been for the sacrifice, though the Vedas were still considered important and Vedic mantras (sounds, chants, verses) still played a major role in pūja itself.

The usual order for the conduct of pūja in a temple would consist of, first, the apicēkam, or the unction/bath of the deity with consecrated water (tīrttam), second, the adornment (alankāram) of the deity with flowers (tirupūkal), vermilion (kunkum), and perhaps sandalwood paste (cantana) and certain investments -- the number and actual composition of the rites of adoration (upācaram) are somewhat variable -- and finally, and invariably, the deity would be presented with food. All of these presentations honor the deity; and all of the substances presented to the deity are transvalued by their contact with the deity. We can now realize that Tinnan performs his worship in exact contravention of the actions and principles underlying pūja. For his offerings (nivētanam) he carries the water for the ritual unction in his mouth, which of course means that the water becomes thoroughly mixed with his saliva (eccil); he carries the garlands of flowers in his hair, which is defiling to the deity who will be adorned with these flowers; worse, given the explicit body imagery



which casts the feet as the lowest and most polluting part of the body, he touches all of his offerings with his feet and his slippers; and worst of all, not only does he give meat to the deity, he tastes it first to find the tastiest morsels. In short, Tinnan not only debases the diety, he structurally reverses the pūja, performing actions which make it seem as if the deity is worshipping him.

This story comes from the tradition of bhakti, and Tinnan's actions, far from intending such debasement and insult, are based on his devotion, which in the end turns out to be pure and extreme. The image is clearly imprinted at the end of the episode; while Tinnan's feet (with, as the text insists, his slippers still on) rest on the head of the deity, a picture which not only would revolt the proper Hindu but which represents the reversal of the rite of Tirupāṭam (the worship of the feet of the deity), he is about to pluck out his second eye because of his intense love of god. Indeed, the major attention to detail in the episode as it is related in the vamcāvali concerns Tinnan's thorough violation of pūja, a violation which in the end is only balanced by the complete sacrifice. So, although the tale seems to come from the mainstream of Tamil bhakti, where devotion is seen to be far more important than ritual, it might be noted that however much ritual appears to be undervalued, the extreme degree of devotion demanded does not so much dispense with ritual as it does demonstrate its importance. Certainly, there would be little power in this story if the reader were not convinced of the value and truth of pūja ritual. In this variant of bhakti ritual is not denounced and deliberately defied as it was in Virasaiva, for example.<sup>29</sup> Rather, we

see here the use of bhakti's stress on devotion to compensate for the lack of agāmic expertise, and, in a corollary sense, the use of this tradition to explain the incorporation of new groups into the increasingly heterogeneous fold of the Hindu community.

Indeed, not only does the incorporation of an episode from the Periyapurānam in a local vāmcāvali suggest that the Ūttumalai pālaiyakārars seek to lend weight to their family's past by including a legend from one of the great Tamil purānas, but the use of this particular episode at this point in the narrative frame suggests as well that the purpose of the tale is to explain how a family which was once a tribal group of hunters and gatherers came to be associated with, and become appropriate for, the worship of Civa and the traditions of kingship. Birth from Pārvati might seem enough, but it is not. The set of transformations which contribute to this basic development will be seen to orient the narrative format of the entire text. But, in the progression from episode to episode there is less the sequential development of an historical relationship than there is a structurally ordered accumulation of differently contextualized relationships which establish this fundamental transformation. Episodes, like mythemes, must therefore be seen always in relation. The interrelation of episodes is only apparent after some time, and is only revealed as the structures of internal relations and patterns of mediation within a series of episodes are established. Within this particular episode the opposition is between pūja and non-pūja, a structurally ordered contradiction which is then mediated by devotion. What devotion does is to transform a hunter into a saint, a saint who

attains release (cuvarkkam) and who is clearly identified with the Kannapan of the Periyapurāṇam, wherein he is canonized as a saint in a great tradition text and because of which he is worshipped and praised in temples throughout Tamil Nāṭu. But the further dimensions of the transformation within the total structure of the text only become apparent in the next episode.

The story of Kaliyaṇ rendered here is a modified version of the story of Tirumāṅkai Ālvār, one of the best known and most prolific of medieval Tamil Vaisnavite bhakti saints and poets. His best known work is the Periyattirumoli. The legendary account of his life<sup>30</sup> is very colorful, as well as of great interest in calculating the ethical content of bhakti. He was born a Kallar, and a Saivite, and was called by the name Nīlan. He was given lands and was made a commander in the army by the Coḷa king. He then fell in love with the maiden Kumutavalli, who was a great devotee of Visnu, and to win her hand he became a bhakta of Visnu and pledged to feed 1008 Vaisnavite bhaktas everyday. To do this he was led to defraud the King, who imprisoned him, though he was subsequently saved from prison by Visnu. But to continue to feed the bhaktas he turned to highway robbery, which provided him with the resources to do the above and to enlarge the Srīraṅkam temple. He was said to have stolen the large golden image of the Buddha in Nāgapattinam to defray these expenses. Finally, he set upon and robbed a wealthy Brahman, who turned out to be Visnu himself. Visnu then taught him the all-powerful mantra which led to his enlightenment.

In the vamcāvali the earlier parts of this legend are left out, and the story begins with Kaliyan's desire to renovate the Srīraṅkam temple. One can only speculate about the principles of selection, but they seem to be correlated with the apparent intent behind the incorporation of this bhakti story which was to connect the mediational and incorporative effects of bhakti, already established in the previous episode, with temple worship, something at which the Maṇavar family had yet to demonstrate its adeptness and fitness. The vamcāvali obviously leaves out the designation of Kallar caste to the hero, though the choice of story suggests little embarrassment about one of the Kallar's traditional occupations, highway robbery (valipparikkam). Of course, the purpose of highway robber is the exalted one of renovating the temple (tiruppani). And, Srī Raṅkanatar, or Viṣṇu, does not seem to disapprove, for he takes on a disguise so that he is the one robbed in both the vamcāvali and the traditional accounts. But he allows himself to be robbed only in the end to arrange for the enlightenment of his great devotee. Interestingly, in the vamcāvali the mode of enlightenment is not a mantra but the contact of Kaliyan's tongue with Raṅkanatar's holy foot (tirupatam); the motif -- in sharp and direct contrast with the previous episode -- is again one in which the relation between deity and devotee is depicted by the contact of head and foot. While Tinnan's devotion offsets the literal subordination of the deity's head to his foot, it is the literal touching of Kaliyan's tongue to the deity's foot here which is the final action. Both stories stress devotion, but the contrast of the two stories is striking indeed in

their final images, and the movement towards the increased ritualism of temple worship in the earlier part of the story is neatly encapsulated here.

So, while this episode is repetitive in some respects -- yet another incorporative use for instance of well-known Tamil bhakti traditions and another demonstration of the devotion of these illustrious Maravar forbears -- two transformations occur. First, the Ūttumalai Maravars become Vaisnavites. Second, and more importantly, we move from a scene in which pūja is neither properly known nor patronized in the form of temple endowments to a scene in which these Maravars are massively endowing one of the most important Tamil Vaisnavite temples. The complexity of this transformation is underscored, however, by the means used to procure resources for this temple endowment, namely, highway robbery. Highway robbery is not only unorthodox behavior which within this text will soon be seen to be highly destructive of the social order, but Kaliyaṇ even stoops to robbing and assaulting Brahmins, a heinous sin. While in the previous episode the structural contradiction between socially and ritually sanctioned behavior and its opposite took the form of agāmic pūja and Tinnan's peculiar nīvetanams, in this episode the contradiction is between the exalted end of tiruppani and the dubious and dangerous means of valipparikkam. The coordinates of these transformations thus establish baselines for subsequent transformations; whereas the procedures for pūja are violated in one episode, in the next they are not only upheld but endowed; whereas highway robbery is the means of this endowment in one episode, so shall we see highway robbery take on

a special, though quite different, role in a moment. But for both of the episodes we have examined so far, borrowed as they are from great bhakti traditions, devotion is the mechanism of transformation. In the story of Kaliyaṇ, however, the end-point of transformation is not simply a jungly saint, but one who achieves enlightenment through a metaphorized enactment of pūja (the tirupātam at the end) and whose devotion leads him to make great gifts to the Srirankam temple. As such Tirumaṅkai is both associated with the great tradition of a major temple center and with kingship, for the granting of great gifts to temples is something done by Kings.

In the next episode the highway robbers are no longer the heroes but the enemies of the heroes, and the vehicle by which yet another transformation occurs. In the previous episode the Maṛavars made the transition from jungly saints to kingly saints who also happened to be robbers; now they become little kings who enter into a series of relations with great kings -- a pattern which takes hold for the rest of the text -- by virtue of their subduing a band of country robbers (cīmaikkallars) who were terrorizing (calliyañcevtārkal) the countryside. This event was quickly subordinated to its result, which is that the Maṛavar is summoned to the court of the Pāṇṭiyan king, representative of one of the three great Tamil Kingships. The Pāṇṭiyans ruled from Maturai over the Tamil area south of the river Vēllār all the way down to Kanyakumari both in the Caṅkam era and later, after they conquered the Cōlas, from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries (and even somewhat later from the small capital of Tenkāci). At this Pāṇṭiyan court, where as we might remember from

the first episode the Maravars made their first appearance, the Maravar was congratulated and given titles, emblems, and rights over land. The title was the Pāṇṭiyan's own name, Vijayakunārāma Pāṇṭiya, and thus represented both the establishment of a special bond and the grant by the King of part of his own substance, or persona, to the Maravar. As emblems, the Pāṇṭiyan gave the Maravar a pair of fly whisks (upayacāmaram) -- general symbols of kingship -- and three banners on which were imprinted the emblems of Indra (valarikkoti), king of the gods, and of the Cola (pulikkoti) and Pāṇṭiya (makarakkoti) dynasties, the two most important Tamil dynasties of the medieval period. The land the Maravar was given was the very land where the highway robbers who had been subdued had lived, and this land was given as a pālaiyapattu. Pālaiyapattu means the title or right (pattu) to a pālaiyam. The word pālaiyam means army, war-camp, or a village surrounded by hillocks.<sup>31</sup> Pālaiyam of course is the base from which we get pālaiyakarar, one who rules over a pālaiyam.

The word in Tamil which means both title, and emblem, is virutu (otherwise spelled pirutu). In Tamil, virutu means "title, banner, trophy, badge of victory, pedigree, genealogy." Other Dravidian cognates include more glosses such as panegyric, praise, power, and valor. It seems, according to Monier-Williams, to be a Dravidian word, but it has been borrowed by Sanskrit in the form of birada or biruda, a "wrong reading" for vi-ruda. Monier-Williams defines the term as a "panegyric to a raja in both prose and verse," and in the form of virudadhvaja it signifies a royal banner. Not only are the king's emblems signs of his own sovereignty, but their

presentation to lesser kings or nobles marks and establishes a special relationship, a substantial bond. The bestowal of emblems and titles, titles which sometimes describe the heroic action performed in the service of the king and which are often one or more of the king's own titles, has the symbolic effect of sharing part of the sovereignty of the king with one of his subjects. The subsequent acceptance of these emblems completes the act of service/worship and serves to acknowledge that it is a great honor for the recipient to share, as a subordinate, part of the king's own royalty. Through this transaction, thus, the king not only shares part of his sovereign substance, but incorporates the "servant" into his own sovereignty, or lordship.

We see thus that these emblems, the title, and the rulership over the *pālaiyam* were all given by the *Pāṇṭiyan* king and thus represent both the newly constituted kingship of Marutappa Tēvar and the fact that this kingship is something constituted by and in relation to the *Pāṇṭiyan* king. The *vamcāvalis* all make it clear that honors and emblems are only meaningful when given by a superior, a king or a deity. Thus, honors must not only be identified in relational terms, these relations are necessarily hierarchical. Similarly, the heroic actions of the *pālaiyakārars* must be symbolically encoded in this hierarchical world; the subduing of a wild elephant or of highway robbers takes on special meaning in these texts only when honors are conferred by superior kings as a result of these actions. The relationship is always one of periphery to center, and of part to whole; the periphery (*pālaiyakārars*) is always oriented to the center (great kings), even as the metonymic part (emblems) only



derives meaning from its relation to the whole (the sovereignty, and the full set of emblems, of a great king).

Having witnessed the incipient structuring of hierarchical relations in south Indian political discourse, the next episode seems somewhat curious, for the Maravar kings now refuse a marriage alliance not only with a series of unnamed kings (these kings all waged war and they were all defeated, their elephants, horses, weapons, titles, banners, and crowns were all seized) but with the Pāṇṭiyan king as well. And yet this story demonstrates the hierarchical and metonymic nature of honors and emblems in a particularly vivid passage. The request of the Pāṇṭiyan king for the hand of a Maravar girl whose beauty is renowned is met with this bold saying (cribbed, it turns out, from Tamil literary sources):<sup>32</sup>

The fates of other kings who have made such an offer are well known. If you do not know this, you can see that we Maravars have captured their weapons and keep them on the outskirts of our country, their crowns are being looked after, their possessions are used as borders in decorating the roofs of our houses, and their umbrellas are folded and kept aside. Do you really hope to get a girl from such a Maravar family for the royal wedding?

Hierarchical relations are established and represented symbolically through these emblems; thus the way of saying that one king has subdued another is to say that he has captured their emblems, not their lands, and this conquest is boldly displayed. Indeed, the emblems are made to embellish one's own kingship, even as they are degraded and made to represent the loss of another's power. This form of symbolic conquest and metonymic domination has had a regular role in south Indian history. When Maravarman Sundara Pāṇṭiyan I (1216-

1268) defeated the Cōla king, he "seized his crown of fine gold, and was pleased to give it to the Bana,"<sup>33</sup> thus displaying not only his conquest of the Cōla throne but metonymically appropriating it by using the crown as one emblem among others that he could present to a subordinate king.

But in the *vamcāvali* there is only a show of bravado when the Maravar is confronted with the Pāṇṭiyan. While the Maravars clearly establish their superiority in relations with other kings, they only vaguely refer to a war with the Pāṇṭiyan, a reference which again is only vaguely related to their move to the north. When this story is repeated in the *vamcāvali* of another Maravar pālaiyakārar family, which claimed to have been at this point undivided from the Ūttumalai branch, the Pāṇṭiyan's request is refused but it is specifically stated that the Maravars feel it would not be right (or just -- *niyāyamalla*) to fight against the Pāṇṭiyans and so leave the country before any battle can take place.<sup>34</sup>

The Ūttumalai *vamcāvali* proceeds at this point to relate another episode in which the Maravars subdue a group of forest (*vaṇam*) dwellers who had been causing trouble along the roads of the northern land to which they had migrated, in recognition of which they are summoned to court by the "*camastānam*", which though unidentified must refer to Vijayanagara, and presented with emblems, land as a pālaiyapattu, and a title. This short episode, largely repetitive but suggestive of the establishment of royal relations with Vijayanagara, also renders their move to the north meaningful in terms other than retreat. The genealogical succession which follows hereafter is

threatened by a king who has no issue. This predicament is solved through the intercession of Veṅkates̄swarar, a form of Visnu around whom one of the grandest Vaisnavite temple traditions in all of south India, at Tiruppati, was established under the patronage of Vijayanagara. This intercession further establishes a second relationship for the Maṛavars in the northern country, thus providing a dual axis of the sort that had initially been set up with the Pāṇṭiyas and with Minakshi in the far south at the beginning of the text. These relations established, however, the Maṛavars then move back to the south, and on their way kill a group of "country Kallars" (nāttukkallars — also suggests that these Kallars are raw, or untransformed) who attacked them. This encounter serves to reestablish a relationship with the Pāṇṭiyas, for they are invited to the Pāṇṭiyan court in recognition of this feat, the former problems apparently totally forgotten. At this point the court is no longer in Maturai, but has shifted to Ukkirankōṭṭai, and so we know that this was the period of the last phase of Pāṇṭiyan rule, when the then five Pāṇṭiyans (pañcapāṇṭavar) had been pushed south of Maturai to the Tenkāci region, sometime probably during the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

On this visit to court, Marutappa Tēvar is given no honors; rather, he is told that if he can subdue the troublesome Kurumpars of the countryside around Ukkirankōṭṭai, he will be given their country as his own palaiyapattu. The Kurumpars were early inhabitants of southern India; according to some accounts they came from Karnataka and settled in Tamil areas in the first millenium A.D.<sup>35</sup> They were a

group with military power, and were said to have built many sturdy forts. They are usually said to have settled principally in Tontaimantalam, where for instance they set up the twenty-four forts and domains which traditionally constituted and divided that country, and where they were subdued by Atontai Cōla, a traditional king whose legendary settlement of Tontaimantalam and designation as progenitor of the Pallava dynasty is directly associated with his vanquishing of the Kurumpars and his subsequent clearing of the forests in which they had dwelt.<sup>36</sup> In traditional accounts the Kurumpars are also said to have been traditional enemies of the Cōlas and the Pāntiyas, as well as caste enemies of the Mutaliars and Vellalars, castes associated with agricultural settlements in the cultural centers of Tamil Natu.<sup>37</sup> Whether or not these traditional accounts provided a model for this section of the vamcāvali, the request of the Pāntiyan king that the Maṛavars defeat the Kurumpars both reassociates the Maṛavars with the Pāntiyans and establishes a basis for their acquisition of settled land rights in southern Tamil Natu in a way reminiscent of the origin myths of the most conspicuous Tamil cultivating castes and of the kings with whom these castes were aligned. Indeed, as soon as the Kurumpars are defeated, the Maṛavars go to their new pālaiyapattu, called Ūttumalai, and clear the jungles and build a fort, having been accorded great honors and given many gifts (apimānamāy anēka mariyātaiyuñceytu vekumatikalun ceytu).

In the next episode, Marutappa Tēvar goes to the Navarāttiri Kolu festival of the Sṛī Vallapa Mahārāja. The Navarāttiri festival (meaning the festival of the nine nights) is coincident with and part

of the Dasarā or Mahānavami festival. By the time of Vijayanagara rule, at least, Mahānavami had become the most important festival for kings in southern India. The festival, in all its forms, was celebrated on the first nine nights and ten days of the lunar month Asvina, which roughly corresponds to the period from mid-September to mid-October, alerting us that the festival was a harvest festival in those areas of India influenced by the southwest monsoon. As one more of the names of the festival, Durgāpūjā, readily suggests, the ritual occasion consisted basically of the worship of the goddess Durga, although in later and variant forms the worship of other goddesses, often tutelary, also took place.

According to the Devipurāṇa, the purposes and objects of this festival were rather all-encompassing:<sup>38</sup>

This is a great and holy vrata conferring great siddhis, vanquishing all enemies, conferring benefits on all people, especially in great floods; this should be performed by Brahmanas for solemn sacrifices and by ksatriyas for the protection of the people, by vaiśyas for cattle wealth, by Sudras desirous of sons and happiness, by women for blessed wifehood and by rich men who hanker for more wealth.

A great variety of pūja rites characterized the performance of the Durgotsava; one striking feature of the textual prescription was the sacrifice of animals, particularly goats and buffaloes. In addition, animals figured in the ritual in that kings and others who kept horses were advised to honor horses from the second to the ninth days, in ways reminiscent of all but the culminating features of the Vedic horse sacrifice, the asvamedha.<sup>39</sup> Each day had particular rites associated with it, as well as certain ubiquitous features such as the

worship of Durga (or the goddess) and extravagant gifts to Brahmins and others. The ninth day in particular became known as Āyuta pūja, in which, in conjunction with the worship of the goddess Sarasvati, the implements of one's profession -- horses and weapons for warriors, tools for workmen, ploughs for cultivators, books for scholars -- were worshipped. Āyutam itself means weapon or arms, thus suggesting the possible military etymology of this rite, an etymology all the more convincing because of the specific associations of the final day with Ksatriyas and military victory.

The tenth day, called Vijayadāsami, was the day on which the festival as it was performed by the kings of Vijayanagara culminated. Indeed, according to Kane,<sup>40</sup> Vijayadāsami, or dasarā, was a great day for all people of all castes, but was especially a day for ksatriyas, nobles, and kings. On this day there was a procession to a place of worship, for the king a place outside his palace. The royal priest (purohita) was to accompany the king, all the while reciting verses about the victory of the king in the quarters; and the king was to honor worthy Brahmins, the astrologer, and the purohita, as well as to "arrange sports of elephants, horses, and footsoldiers."<sup>41</sup> After the worship of the goddess, arrows were to be shot off in the presence of the king signifying the victory of the gods over the asuras, and more specifically the defeat by Durga of the buffalo demon, Mahisasura. When the king reentered his palace his entire retinue was to shout "jaya," meaning victory, and lights were to be waved before him by courtesans. According to Kane the king who performed this auspicious ceremony every year was to secure long life, health, prosperity, and

victory; and no king who did not celebrate Vijayadāsami could anticipate victory within the year.

The political and cosmo-moral centrality of Vijayanagara for late medieval south India led to the proliferation of performances of Mahānavami in the larger little kingdoms; the Nāyakas performed it in Maturai, the Cētopatis performed it in Rāmanātapuram, and claimed indeed that this mandate of sovereignty had been awarded them by the Maturai Nāyakas, and the Tontaimāns performed it somewhat later in Putukkōttai. In Ūttumalai, interestingly enough, it was never performed on a very grand scale; instead, the Paṅkunipramodsa festival took its place as the principal state festival. This took place on the first ten days of Pankuni month, roughly the same as February/March, and as a harvest festival actually corresponded better to the climatic cycle of the northeast monsoon, on which the Andhra and Tamil countries depend for their major rains. But perhaps the most significant reason for the difference was that the deity worshipped in Navarāttiri or Dasarā was Durga, or some other, usually Saivite, form of the goddess, whereas the tutelary deity of the Ūttumalai family was Navanīttakirusna.

In any case, in the Ūttumalai vamaṇāvali the Maravars went to a Navarāttiri festival which was put on by Śrī Vallapa Mahārāja. This Mahārāja's festival, in common with the general description above, was renowned for its athletic and agonistic events, in particular for its wrestling matches and animal fights, and the contest of royal elephants provides the occasion for Marutappa Tēvar's display of his bravery and skill. He tames an elephant that has run amuck, and then

he is honored by being mounted on the tamed elephant and provided with many emblems and honors, and a title proclaiming his subjugation of the elephant. Elephants are a symbol of royalty, and are the usual vehicles of south Indian kings, and their importance was already seen in the Tontaimān vamcāvali. In this instance the subduing of the elephant has much the same consequences for Marutappa Tēvar as it had for the Tontaimān, and we see a further progression in his attainment of kingly appropriateness and power.

Indeed, it is therefore not surprising that one of the first acts of Marutappa Tēvar after this is to establish a landed settlement for Brahmans (akkirakāram) and to build a temple for these Brahmans. These are two of the primary signs of kingship, and indeed it is munificence to Brahmans and temples which not only enhances royal authority but in south Indian history has been absolutely central to its cultural constitution. In the case of the Ūttumalai pālaiyakārars, this action represents the appropriation of not only the signs but the actions of Brahmanic kingship. Of course, they are still not universal kings. Embedded within this narrative is the relatively brief comment that power in Maturai passed from the Pāntiyas to the Nāyakas, who summon Marutappa Tēvar to assist them in the protection of their fort in Maturai. This event takes on greater significance in other vamcāvalis, where the incorporation of the southern pālaiyakārars as protectors of the seventy-two bastions of the Nāyaka fort is a major event and becomes the central metaphor for the reconstitution of the late medieval southern Tamil political order. This will be talked about further when we consider the



chronicle of the Maturai Nayakas.

The next episode in the vamcāvali demonstrates even more clearly the continued participation of the Maravars in a hierarchical system or relations, one in which they still look up. The Nāyakas build an akkirakāram which is then destroyed by certain "criminals." Marutappa Tēvar arrives on the scene and captures this outrageous lot. As a result of this, the Nāyaka honors him and gives him emblems as well as a gift of land on half assessment (arttakkanikkai). Interestingly, much greater emphasis is given to this in the narrative than to their own establishment of a Brahman settlement; thus protecting the royal akkirakāram still brings more honor than establishing one for oneself, if, that is, relative emphasis in the text can be used as an index of this.

After this, the Muslim rulers take over the southern Tamil country, and the Maravars are as helpful and submissive (the sense of loyalty is usually conveyed through words which more properly suggest submissiveness) to them as they had been to previous kings, and they are awarded emblems and honors by Makammatu Yicumukān (Muhammed Yusuf Khan) in recognition of their service to him. Among other things, the Maravar helped the Muslim ruler bring under control those who were causing trouble (tusattanam), those who were not submissive (kilppatintu natavāmal), and those who were not paying their tribute (toppāvuṅkotāmal). At that time, the text tells us, there was anarchy (arājika; i.e. no kingly authority) in the Tirunelvēli country, and Mukammatu called Marutappa Tēvar and gave him two thousand men and told him to bring order in the area. Marutappa Tēvar did accordingly,

and was congratulated and told that he should likewise perform carefully "the work of the palace" (intappati aranmanaikkāriyattil jākṛirataiyāka natantukkollaccolli) and do what he is asked, thus suggesting a bit more concern than before with specified and regularized forms of command.

The final transition of political power comes when the British supplant the Muslims as the regional rulers. But even here, the story is continuous. Again, the Maravars are of service to the great kings, and again, they are given gifts and honors by them. There has been one significant shift, however, which began under the Muslims, and this is the new concern of the ruling powers with taxes. One of the ways in which the pālaiyakārar assists the Muslim ruler is to bring under control those who do not pay taxes; and under the British the Maravars are engaged in collecting taxes from recalcitrant pālaiyakārars. Thus, while political relations with the Muslims and the British continue to be defined by services performed for kings and the recognition of these deeds in the form of the presentation of honors, the sudden importance of taxes signals a new element in the political system. The introduction of the tax as a significant item of political currency comes with the Muslims and the British in the eighteenth century, and yet it is not associated with the disappearance of honors and gifts. In this latter regard, the Honorable Company awards the Maravar pālaiyakārar with a palanquin, a horse, and a green umbrella. Well they should have, for as the vancāvali announces, "we have severed the heads of bulls belonging to our neighboring enemies."

Conclusion: Gift, Service, and Narrative  
in a South Indian Little Kingdom

As is true in the other *vamcāvalis* as well, the central events of these texts are the presentations of honors and the actions which lead up to these presentations. The episodes seem as a result often repetitive (less so in this than in most other such texts), but each episode is at the same time part of a narrative flow which advances the story in structural sequences. Within each episode, the contradictions between order and disorder, field and forest, and center and periphery are mediated by service, actions that is which merit the recognition of the king and which result in the central transformative events of the texts, the gifts. Looking at this text as a whole, we see the transitions from tribal chief to saint and then from highway robber to saint followed by a series of transformations through which saints become little kings of increasing conformance to Brahmanic and sastraic canons of kingship. Even so, the little kings never become universal kings; their being and the significance of their actions are always constituted in reference (and in direct relationship) to one of a series of superior kings, the transactions with whom form the key events of the narrative.

Perhaps the key hermeneutical conclusion of this study is that while the meaning of the text can be to some degree decoded by attending to what structuralists would call a structure of oppositions and mediations, the relations established by these oppositions and mediations cannot be arbitrarily shuffled to attain some deeper structuralist insight. In fact, the relations take on their meaning

in terms of what might be called a narrative logic, or structure, in the text. While Levi-Strauss can be read instructively by historians who deal with ethnohistorical texts of this sort, historians (and indeed, I would contend, anthropologists too) must not heed Levi-Strauss' advice to reorganize "our myth according to a time referent of a new nature, . . . namely a two-dimensional time referent which is simultaneously diachronic and synchronic, and which accordingly integrates the characteristics of langue on the one hand, and those of parole on the other."<sup>42</sup> Levi-Strauss succeeds only in subordinating parole to langue (the former, for Saussure, being non-reversible time and the latter being reversible) where for ethnohistorical texts the parole is the narrative structure, and for that matter the entire sense of time, constituted by the text itself. Therefore, parole -- that is, the narrative structure -- must be identified and preserved (for it is irreducible as well as irreversible) as the basis for all the transformations which occur within the text. In our attempt to preserve parole here, we have noted a distinct progression in the self image of the Maravars -- a progressive refinement -- and we have identified both the importance of gifts and of services in our text: indeed, we have delineated the ways in which particular services and particular gifts were emplotted in a larger narrative frame. This narrative frame then provides the necessary interpretive framework for understanding the meaning of the transformations we have witnessed.

So, to summarize, we have seen that gifts of emblems, titles, and land are not only the central points of each narrative episode, they are central events in that they constitute the relationship of

the chief and the king, and in that they transform the chief by adding to his persona those rights and privileges which are so fundamental to the cultural definition of authority. But these gifts, however "freely given" they are (i.e., given out of the favor or grace of the king, and indeed the texts never suggest that the king has any obligation to give any of these gifts), always follow some manner of "service", which really means (as for example in the case of the word pani) worshipful action performed both to demonstrate submission to the authority of the great king and to display this submission in the form of some heroic action in honor of the great king. The concepts of loyalty and service are thus actually combined in this more general notion of submission, which in the form of some act, gesture, or statement seems always to set in motion the kinds of "political" relationships we observe in these texts.

Other similar texts enable us to understand somewhat better the meaning of service offered to great kings by little kings and of gifts proffered by great kings to little kings, but an examination of them would be beyond the scope of a single paper. The purpose of the present paper was less to provide a full statement of the cultural content of these texts than to suggest the historiographical possibilities inherent in a sustained analysis of texts of this sort.

Thus, there is much to be learned from this text both about the way the past is conceptualized, and about the units of the past which are privileged in an ethnohistorical account and therefore must, at least to some extent, be taken very seriously when the outside historian would attempt his own historical reconstruction. In this

paper I have only been able to hint at the way this might be done, though I have been able to show the interpenetration of different modes of analysis with the study of a single text, a text which, incidently, is of a genre which has been virtually totally neglected by south Indian historians. This neglect stands in marked contrast to the overwhelming importance granted to inscriptions, which are often used in such a way, for example by dating them and working them into chronological order, as to correlate with Western notions of time. In our enthusiasm for reconstructing the history of an area which seems to have had no prior history, we are often far too unaware of the fundamental question behind our stated objectives: whose history are we really constructing?

## FOOTNOTES

1. E.g., R. Hardgrave, The Nadars of Tamilnad: The Political Culture of a Community in Change (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); F. Conlon, A Caste in a Changing World: The Chitrapur Saraswat Brahmins, 1700-1935 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); K. Leonard, Social History of an Indian Caste (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); R. Inden, Marriage and Rank in Bengali Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).
2. One significant departure from this approach is found in Inden's book on the caste histories of Kayasthas and Brahmins in Bengal. While recognizing that some of the caste histories he used were clearly propagandistic, and that many others produced in the late nineteenth century owed their form to the census, Inden used the "cultural categories" in these histories and genealogies as the "categories of social historical analysis." (p. 1). The results of his inquiry were astonishingly interesting and useful for understanding the very nature and dynamic structure of the caste system.
3. J. Vansina, Oral Tradition: A study in Historical Methodology (Chicago: Aldine, 1961).

4. See the review of the historiographical literature in  
S. Errington, "Style in the Meanings of the Past," The Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 38, no. 2 (February 1979).
5. See Sir Richard Winstedt, A History of Classical Malay Literature (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969).
6. J. Siegal, Shadow and Sound: The Historical Thought of a Sumatran People (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979),  
p. 16.
7. Errington, p. 232.
8. Errington, p. 242.
9. Perhaps most notably in the work of H. White, Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).
10. M. I. Finley, "Myth, Memory, and History," History and Theory (1965), 5:282.
11. Finley, p. 283.
12. B. S. Cohn, "History and Anthropology: Towards a Rapprochement,"  
paper prepared for the Conference on "History in the 1980s"  
(June 15-19, 1980), p. 59.
13. William Sewell, Work and Revolution in France (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1981), p. 9.



14. My sense of the problematic here was influenced by the work of Siegal, who says about his own study of Sumatran historical thought: "My analysis of the texts is an attempt to shift the concerns of the text into a vocabulary familiar to readers of English. I do not, however, claim either to have succeeded in freeing myself of a metalanguage or to say that my interest stops there. For it is also my wish to point out the Atjehnese interest in literature, to say myself with the Dutch, however narrowly."
  
15. See my, "The Structure and Meaning of Political Relations in a South Indian Little Kingdom," Contributions to Indian Sociology, No. 2 (1979), 13:169-205.
  
16. H. H. Wilson, Mackenzie Collection: A Descriptive Catalogue (Calcutta, 1828), p. 2.
  
17. Wilson, p. xi.
  
18. India Office Library Records, Mackenzie Collections, Unbound Translations, Class XII (hereafter, Unbound Translations, Class XII).
  
19. Wilson, p. 428.
  
20. Madras Journal of Science and Literature, vol. 6, p. 149.
  
21. India Office Library Records, Mackenzie Manuscripts, General, vol. 4 (See India Office Library Index, Mackenzie Collections, p. 49).

22. Census and Dehazada of the Province of Tirunelvelie, Revenue Department Sundrie, no. 39, Tamil Nadu Archives.
23. Mackenzie Manuscripts, no. D.3583, Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras.
24. Both passages are quoted in V. Kanakasabhai, The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago (Tinnevely: The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, 1965), pp. 42, 43.
25. In Selections from Old Records: Papers Relating to the Poligar Wars, Tamil Nadu Archives, ASO(D) 338.
26. See A. Appadurai, "Right and Left Hand Castes in South India," The Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol. 11 (June-September 1974); B. E. F. Beck, Peasant Society in Koñu (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1972); and B. Stein, Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), chapter 5.
27. R. Inden, "Ritual, Authority and Cyclic Time in Hindu Kingship," in J. F. Richards, ed., Kingship and Authority in South Asia (Madison: University of Wisconsin Publication Series, 1978), pp. 36, 37. For a detailed account of the practice of pūja in a south Indian temple see C. A. Breckenridge, The Śrī Minaksi Sundareshvarar Temple: Worship and Endowments in South India, 1833 to 1925, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Department of History, 1976).

28. Inden, p. 37.
29. A. K. Ramanujan, Speaking of Siva (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1973).
30. Given in Swami Shuddananda Bharati's Alvar Saints (Ramachandrapuram, Trichy District: Anpu Nilayam Publishers, 1942); and in K. Zvelebil, Tamil Literature (Leiden/Koln: E. J. Brill, 1975), pp. 159, 160.
31. Tamil Lexicon (Madras: University of Madras), p.2638.
32. See Maturaikkalampakam (Madras: Saiva Siddhanta Karakam, 1968); and Tiravankakalampakam (Madras: S. Rajam Publishers, 1957).
33. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, The Colas (Madras: The University of Madras, 1975), p. 394.
34. Naturakkuricci Palaiyakkaran Vamcavali, Madras: Government Oriental Manuscript Library, D.3586.
35. "Account of Tontaimantalam and its Ancient Inhabitants, Vetars and Kurumpars, Their Customs, etc.," in Wilson, p. 423; and in T. V. Mahalingam, ed., Mackenzie Manuscript, 2 vols. (Madras: The University of Madras, 1972), 1:96.
36. "Account of Kandava Rayan and Setu Rayan who Ruled from the Fort of Tiruvitaiccuram in the Arcot Forest," in Mahalingam, 1:94.
37. See Mahalingam, 1:96; also see Rev. W. Taylor, A Catalogue Raisonné of Oriental Manuscripts in the Library of the (late)

College, Ft. St. George (Madras, 1858), in particular "Account of the Curumbars," sec. 10, no. 828, p. 420.

38. P. V. Kane, History of Dharmaśāstra, 5 vols. (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1974), 5:156.
39. Namely, the circumambulation of the territory of the kingdom by the horse and then the ritual sacrifice of the horse. See Satapatha Brahmana, vol. 13.
40. Kane, p. 190.
41. Kane, p. 191.
42. Claude Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 206-207. Also, for a far more sophisticated argument which makes a number of related points, see Terence Turner, "Narrative Structure and Mythopoesis: A Critique and Reformulation of Structuralist Concepts of Myth, Narrative, and Poetics," Arethusa, no. 1 (Spring 1977), 10:103-163.